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- [UMaine](#) (Orono)
- [UMA](#) (Augusta)
- [UMF](#) (Farmington)
- [UMFK](#) (Fort Kent)
- [UMM](#) (Machias)
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Testing Improvements Planned For University of Maine System

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FEB 2021

Testing to pause at UMaine and USM as University of Maine System addresses technology challenges and completes training in support of up to a ten-fold increase in testing volume for the spring semester. Full daily testing schedule resumes Monday.

Orono, Maine — The University of Maine System is working with its testing provider, Shield T3, to address some technical challenges and overcome weather-related logistical issues to implement new testing protocols for the spring semester. The [new testing plan](#) will support up to a ten-fold increase in monthly testing volumes, allowing UMS to conduct weekly testing of all students, faculty, and staff participating in an on-campus experience in the spring semester.

Technical challenges on the first day of Shield T3 asymptomatic COVID-19 testing at UMaine and USM led to problems scanning the QR codes on the saliva sample tubes. The scanning problem impacted 693 of the approximately 2,700 samples collected on the first day of Shield T3 testing. Many participants also experienced excessive wait times for their appointments at testing sites.

Chancellor Malloy explained the challenges and expressed appreciation for the resilience and patience of community members [in this message](#) to students, faculty and staff.

The University of Maine and the University of Southern Maine are the first two institutions to transition to the Shield T3 testing protocols. Testing at UMA, UMF, UMFK, UMM, UMPI, and Maine Law will move to the new protocol later in the month and was unaffected by the technical challenges with Shield T3 implementation.

NEXT STEPS

The University of Maine System will immediately replace the QR code labels with traditional linear barcode labels for the saliva samples collected from participants. Winter weather caused a delay in the delivery of replacements today. An order of 20,000 new barcode labels is expected to arrive on Wednesday, Feb. 3.

Testing at UMaine and USM will be paused Wednesday, Feb. 3, to transition to the new labels, test equipment and improve processes. UMaine will conduct extremely limited pilot testing on Thursday and Friday of this week. Tests appointments scheduled for the remainder of the week at UMaine will not be rescheduled.

USM’s testing schedule focuses on residential students early in the week and projects a lower volume of sample collections from primarily faculty, staff, and commuter students at the end of the week. USM plans to complete its scheduled testing this week. Both UMaine and USM will be resuming full testing schedules starting Monday, Feb 8.

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